

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Division of Special Education

PROBING QUESTIONS

Purpose: These questions are intended to assist a district while looking at and drilling down their data.

Essential Question # 3: Are students with disabilities from all race/ethnicities appropriately identified and receiving FAPE in the LRE?

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (for questions pertaining to Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality, see below):

Data Review Questions

- What percent of student enrollment are students with disabilities?
- In what placements are students with disabilities being served?
- What percent of child count by race/ethnicity are students with disabilities?
- Are evaluations completed within timelines? If not, why not?
- What does the review of referral/eligibility data reveal? How do the numbers referred and found eligible and eligibility rates vary by parent/teacher referrals, by race/ethnicity, etc?
- How does the districts' incidence rate compare to the state average overall and by disability category? To similar districts?
- Are there any specific disability groups with high number of students in more restrictive settings?
- What do placements by age, race/ethnicity and/or building show? What trends and patterns can be observed when disaggregated by ethnicity or race?

Instructional Programs/Models Questions

- What instructional models are used within the agency?

	Grade Level		
	E	M	H
Co – teaching/CWC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Common planning times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative supports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities to evaluate programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Essential Question # 3: Are students with disabilities from all race/ethnicities appropriately identified and receiving FAPE in the LRE?

- How does the district ensure there is a continuum of services to address student's needs?
- Are there any programs or classes in your district offered to non-disabled students in which students with disabilities do not participate? If yes, what are the programs or classes? Why do they not participate?
- What are some things that could be done so that more students could be served in general education buildings/classrooms?
- How does the district ensure that students with disabilities have the same opportunity to learn the same content as their non-disabled peers, even though they may need a different kind of instruction?
- Describe the types of intervention (including early intervening) that the district utilizes to reduce the likelihood that students will experience learning difficulties. What evidence is available to verify the effectiveness of these interventions?
- What factors are looked at for determining least restrictive environment for students?
- What steps are taken to reduce/eliminate obstacles to placing students in the least restrictive environment?
- What steps are taken by the agency to ensure that students with disabilities are placed in the least restrictive environment? (i.e., the time special education students spend outside the general education environment is considered as the last option and is based on individual student need not teacher's needs, philosophy/personal attitude, school structure and/or scheduling of classes).
- Describe the efforts of the district to maintain a continuum of placement options (least restrictive to most restrictive) and support students as they move through the continuum. What does the district take into consideration when deciding whether a student can be educated satisfactorily in the regular classroom?

Professional Development Questions

- What trainings have been provided to the individuals conducting special education evaluations?
- Describe the kind of training that is offered to regular education teachers with regard to teaching students with disabilities?
- Describe the professional development opportunities provided to special education teachers and general education teachers in relation to differentiated instructional practices and cultural differences?

ACCOMMODATIONS/MODIFICATIONS QUESTIONS

- How does the district ensure collaboration among general and special educators?
- Are special education teachers primarily seen as direct service providers or as a resource to general educators in accommodating the needs of special education students?
- Do all behavioral expectations apply to all students, or can they be adjusted to accommodate different circumstances, for instance, making adjustments based on race/ethnicity or disability?

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- How does the district ensure accommodations and modifications to instruction for students with disabilities are communicated and implemented within the general education classroom? What barriers exist to the provision of those supports?

File Review Questions

- Are individualized accommodations and modifications to instruction that support participation in the general education environment provided and listed on IEPs? How are those decisions made?

Parental Involvement Questions

- How are parents involved in improving services for students with disabilities?

Low Incidence Disabilities Questions

- Does your agency have a sufficient number of qualified staff to provide the necessary services to students identified with low incidence disabilities?
- Are appropriate services identified for students with low incidence disabilities, and are those services listed on the IEPs and provided to the students?
- How many visually impaired/blind students have been or will be referred to Rehabilitative Services for the Blind (RSB)? When were they referred? What kinds of services have they are will they received from RSB?

RACIAL/ETHNIC DISPROPORTIONALITY:

Data Review Questions

- What measures are used to collect and record data on student referral ad eligibility and are these broken down by race/ethnicity and disability areas? How does the district use this data to ensure appropriate procedures to refer and evaluate students for special education? Is this data evaluated annually?
- What actions or initiatives has your district implemented to address any disproportionality issues in your district?
- Does the district track and disaggregate classroom-based measures by race/ethnicity and disability? What does this data indicate?

Instructional Programs/Models Questions

- Are there programs in which students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are over- or underrepresented? If so, what steps are taken to reduce or eliminate obstacles that prohibit student involvement and progress in the general education curriculum?
- What specific measures are taken into account to remove bias from behavioral policies?
- How is the curriculum responsive to cultural differences?
- How does the district help teachers understand the ways race/ethnicity, culture, social class and language influence learning and achievement for all students?

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Professional Development Questions

- How are teacher training and support needs determined to ensure teachers can effectively address learning needs through differentiated instruction aligned to academic grade level content?

Student Assessment Questions

- In determining eligibility and placement for racial/ethnic minority students, do you make any special considerations regarding possible bias in assessment measures? If yes, what are the considerations? Do you document the considerations in the evaluation report?
- Describe the types of tests and instruments used to conduct the multi-factored evaluation when a student is suspected of having a disability. How does the district ensure that tests and assessment practices used for evaluation are not discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis?
- Who is involved in interpreting assessments for special education and what does this process look like?

Parental Involvement Questions

- What has your district done to involve families and communities in the discussion of needs for students from diverse race/ethnicities?
- Describe how the district identifies and accesses community resources to fill the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. How does the district identify and alleviate resource gaps?

*Includes questions related to SPP Indicators 5, 9, 10 and 11